

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO. AP14/5

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL
19 FEBRUARY 2014**

SUBJECT: RACIALLY MOTIVATED HATE CRIME

SUMMARY:

1. This paper responds to questions raised by PCC Tim Passmore arising from an article in the East Anglian Daily Times on 21 November, 2013. The article arose after the national publication of data relating to racial incidents by the Ministry of Justice on 13 September 2012.
2. This document focuses on more recent data published on 19 December 2013 while providing an update on recording processes, data quality and the Suffolk Hate Crime Service.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the content of this report.

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1.1. This paper responds to questions raised by PCC Tim Passmore arising from an article in the East Anglian Daily Times on 21 November, 2013. The article arose after the national publication of data relating to racial incidents by the Ministry of Justice on 13 September 2012.¹
- 1.2. To set the context of the published data the following definitions are used by ACPO to categorise a hate incident and the sub-category of hate crime. The data published in 2012 relates to hate incidents motivated by racism, which utilises a flag on records and also covers records recorded under a number of offence titles.
- 1.3. A hate incident is: *“Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”*
- 1.4. Whilst a hate crime is defined specifically as: *“Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”*

ANALYSIS

- 1.5. The Home Office have released a more up to date report on hate crime on 17 December 2013² after the article was published in the East Anglian Daily Times and this paper makes reference to this more recent paper.
- 1.6. This document provides a comprehensive national evaluation of hate crime and incidents, covering data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), police recorded crimes and courts service.
- 1.7. The report highlights the following key points around hate crime in general:
 - The CSEW estimates around 278,000 hate incidents occur each year across England and Wales
 - The police record 42,236 hate crimes a year, of which 30,234 are racial/religiously aggravated
 - Nationally 40% of hate crimes are reported to the police, dropping from 51% in 2007/2008
 - The latest national data shows no national change in the volume of racist incidents³, although there is significant variation between forces
- 1.8. Table 1 below sets out the published figures for Suffolk and its most similar forces.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/racist-incidents-table-england-and-wales-2011-to-2012--2>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-overview-of-hate-crime-in-england-and-wales>

³ An overview of hate crime in England and Wales, Table 2.08

	Number of racist incidents				Change 2011/12 - 2012/13		3 Year Average (2009 to 2012)
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12*	2012/13	Number	Percentage (%)	
Devon and Cornwall	1,036	931	877	806	-71	-8	948
Norfolk	469	605	664	607	-57	-9	579
North Wales	375	327	377	341	-36	-10	360
North Yorkshire	197	215	237	298	61	26	216
Suffolk	373	294	477	379	-98	-21	381
Warwickshire	358	367	365	309	-56	-15	363
West Mercia	715	765	904	796	-108	-12	795
Wiltshire	419	393	375	344	-31	-8	396

*Relates to date referenced in EADT

Table 1: MSG Comparison of Racist Incidents

- 1.9. Suffolk shows significant annual variation within the data, with 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 showing the widest swing between years but neither being significantly distant from the average. Across the country there is wider year on year variation within Forces, in part due to the relatively small number of cases being reported on a Force level basis.
- 1.10. Within the latest published data there is a 21% drop in the volume of recorded racist incidents within Suffolk, the largest drop in the Constabularies Most Similar Group, but in line with the national trend of reducing numbers of recorded incidents.
- 1.11. Breaking down the local data it is clear that the majority of hate incidents reported to Suffolk Constabulary are offences such as Public Order (49.2%), Violence Without Injury (13.0%), or of a non-criminal nature (26.5%). This is not to trivialise the impact on the victim, as these offences and incidents are highly distressing and cause significant concern to those involved, but does show that lower level offences represent the majority of reporting.
- 1.12. It should be noted that data for the current year (2013/2014) shows levels of race hate incidents in line with the figures for last year, with an average of 33.6 cases a month, compared to 31.5 for 2012/2013. Beneath this is an increase in the proportion of non-crime incidents, a reported hate incident which does constitute a criminal offence, up to 29.1% of the total from 26%, and this will be kept under observation to ensure that offences are recorded as crimes in line with national recording practices.
- 1.13. As the national report highlights, the CSEW covers data beyond individual's experience of crime, and includes perceptions of the criminal justice agencies. This measures areas of public confidence, whether the police treat people with respect and fairly, and whether Suffolk Constabulary is doing a good job. It is important to remember that one of the key factors around the reporting of crime to the police is public confidence, and that the perceptions of the general public will play a large role in the cases that are brought to our attention.
- Suffolk Constabulary is ranked 12th of 42 forces for overall Public Confidence and has seen a rise in rates of public confidence in the last 6 months from 72.5% to 78.6%
 - Suffolk Constabulary is ranked 2nd of 42 forces for treating people with respect and has seen a rise in this area in the last 6 months from 87.2% to 91.2%
 - Suffolk Constabulary ranks 17th of 42 forces for fair treatment. This is however down from previous periods where it has been ranked 12th and a slight reduction in the overall rates has been noted from 68.3% to 66.9%.

- 1.14. Suffolk Constabulary is working hard to engage with all communities to help improve levels of confidence and trust, and it is felt that positive relationships are present particular within our Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
- 1.15. Suffolk Constabulary also carries out surveys of victims of racist incidents, attempting to survey all eligible victims in this group. While the number of respondents is relatively low, with 60 respondents to engage in the last 12 months, performance is relatively good, with 83.3% of victims of racist incidents satisfied with the service they have received.

Aspect	% Satisfied
Ease of Contact	94.7%
Actions	86.7%
Follow-Up	75.0%
Treatment	95.0%
Whole Experience	83.3%

Table 2: Racist Incidents Satisfaction Levels (12 months to 30 September 2013)

- 1.16. As the table shows, there is high regard for the way that victims are treated by staff, however as with all areas of crime the follow up and provision of updates to victims is a challenge. This is consistently seen as the weakest area of satisfaction performance, both for Suffolk and for all other Forces across the country and is a priority for the force on its three year plan.

RECORDING PROCESSES AND DATA QUALITY

- 1.17. It is important to reiterate that the data presented in the national report covers both crimes and incidents, and that recording processes may have an impact on the figures. In Suffolk all racial incidents are recorded on the crime management system even though a crime may not have occurred, providing a single location for staff to manage the investigation of these incidents and providing a consistent structure to the data. This also provides a robust location to carry out audits of the data and for data analysis.
- 1.18. A task was initiated in May 2013 to review hate incidents and crimes dating back to 1 April 2012 to determine data quality and to ensure standards are maintained. This process is now undertaken on a monthly basis. The results of the audit are reported to area commanders and via data quality audit process to T/ACC Skevington. Suffolk Constabulary takes the management of data quality very seriously, ensuring that both offences and incidents are accurately recorded.
- 1.19. Continuous work is undertaken within the Constabulary to enhance staff understanding of hate incidents and crime, including internal communications and training of staff.

SUFFOLK HATE CRIME SERVICE

- 1.20. It is widely accepted that hate crime remains largely under reported. This is similarly recognised when addressing the reporting of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences. As such these are areas where the Constabulary has looked to increase the number of reported and recorded cases.
- 1.21. During 2012 Suffolk Hate Crime Partnership commissioned Sheffield Hallam to research the reporting of hate crime in Suffolk. Within the executive summary of their report "Hate Crime in Suffolk Understanding Prevalence and Support Needs (2013)" they highlighted the difficulty in identifying the levels of under reporting of hate crime, but provide a number of reasons for non-reporting.

- 1.22. The Suffolk Hate Crime Survey undertaken for this study shows that reporting of hate crime in Suffolk varies by incident type from 56% for more serious incidents to just 11% for less serious incidents.
- 1.23. However, the non-reporting of hate crime needs to be considered against the context of non-reporting of all crime. The British Crime Survey (2010/11) found that 62% of all volume crimes (such as burglary and vehicle related crime) were not reported to the police.
- 1.24. Using the British Crime Survey (2006-11) and other studies, it has been estimated that police recorded hate crime for Suffolk could be under reported by up to 74 per cent. However, this estimate should be treated with caution as the comparably high levels of recorded hate crime in Suffolk compared to other similar police force areas indicates that the level of non-reporting may be lower than this estimate may suggest.
- 1.25. The Suffolk Hate Crime Survey found that the main reasons for non-reporting of hate crime were the common occurrence of incidents; the perceived effectiveness of the police in dealing with incidents and their willingness to act; and a fear of reprisals for reporting.
- 1.26. As explained above there are comparably high levels of recorded hate crime in Suffolk compared to other similar police force areas. The role of Suffolk Hate Crime Service (SHCS) is to support victims of hate crime but also deliver Hate Crime Awareness Sessions to individuals and promote the 3rd party reporting centres. Over the last four years there has been an increase in partnership working across all communities including hard to reach communities to gain knowledge and understanding as to the issues they have and to increase the confidence of these communities to come forward and speak to Suffolk Police about what has happened to them.
- 1.27. Individuals also have the opportunity to report hate crime direct to SHCS without having to engage with the Police should this be their wish. Any case provided to SHCS which is to remain anonymous on CIS will be recorded as a hate incident. SHCS are keen to further engage with the 3rd Party Reporting Centres to encourage more reporting of incidents. To achieve this a new policy is currently being written and will be launched at an event to be hosted by PCC Tim Passmore, in March 2014. At this event people will also be encouraged to come forward to act as Respect Champions.
- 1.28. Currently the Respect Champion programme has been available to adults with Learning Disabilities. They have attended two days of training on hate crime, the importance of reporting, their rights as individuals and how to report. Many have attended training events to assist SHCS in explaining the impact of hate crime on an individual to the audience. Some have been in to assist with school visits including PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) lessons and school assemblies. The majority have encouraged others within their community to report what has happened to them. It is anticipated that new Respect Champions covering all aspects of diversity will work within their own communities encouraging a person to report what has happened to them and, on occasions, support someone who is not yet ready to formally report.
- 1.29. It is the belief of SHCS that some of the increase in reporting of hate incidents reflects the increased number of people reporting inappropriate language and targeting of individuals on social media. We regularly have reports of individuals who are distressed by what has been written about them or someone they may know, or is part of their community, on social media. Often the individual is vulnerable and this vulnerability is targeted but the language used may not cross the threshold to be

recorded as a Criminal Offence. SHCS has engaged with Facebook but on occasions it is their perception that this is not breaching their code of conduct and so it remains. When a perpetrator has been identified SHCS has worked with the local SNT who have provided words of advice to them requesting removal of the offending comments or pictures. This has been effective and highlights to the perpetrator that their comments are seen by others and they should be mindful of their content.

- 1.30. Emphasising the impact of social media and changing routes of abuse, footballer Stan Collymore⁴ has recently commented in the press on racist messages he has received via Twitter. As high profile victims publicise these incidents it is likely that the police and third party reporting services will see an increase in the levels of reports made to them.
- 1.31. The SHCS encourage individuals to report low level incidents which will be recorded as a hate incident as this is as important as the more serious hate crimes. Addressing the low level hate incidents will potentially prevent the escalation into more significant offences or broader community issues.
- 1.32. Suffolk Constabulary is proud that the reporting of hate crime is higher in comparison with similar forces. This in part is due to increased confidence of Police Officers in asking an individual if they feel the crime they are a victim of could be due to them being targeted and so a victim of hate crime. Increased confidence in reporting to Suffolk Constabulary in part is due to community members receiving a positive experience when they report a hate crime and then encouraging others to report within that community.
- 1.33. For example within the Traveller community the Constabulary have spent a long time encouraging members of the community to report incidents. It has taken several years for individuals to allow anonymous reports to be recorded but recently there have been a number of reports of hate crime against this community direct to the Constabulary.
- 1.34. All new Police Officers and PCSOs attend a week of diversity training as part of their initial training. Whilst they gain an understanding and a new confidence in engaging with a variety of communities this can also lead to a positive experience for the communities. Feedback from community members has highlighted an increase in confidence in speaking to the police as they know that there is a respect for their community.
- 1.35. We continue to receive requests for advice and guidance by other forces as to how we record hate incidents and hate crimes in Suffolk. They recognise the potential difference in under reporting and are keen to understand how other Forces are engaging with communities. Reporting of hate crime should be seen as a positive move forward in engaging with communities across the county and identifying community tensions which can be tackled in a multi-agency strategy to prevent serious incidents.

CONCLUSION

- 1.36. It is widely accepted that hate crime remains largely under reported, both locally and nationally. However Suffolk Hate Crime Service continues to receive requests for advice and guidance by other forces as they recognise that their reporting is under reporting by a larger scale than that of Suffolk and they are keen to increase theirs.
- 1.37. Reporting of hate crime should be seen as a positive move forward in engaging with communities across the county and identifying community tensions which can then be tackled in a multi-agency strategy to prevent serious incidents. As such the

⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-25838114>

Constabulary will continue to monitor the levels of cases recorded within the county and will investigate declines in the levels of recorded hate crime and incidents.

- 1.38. It is expected that there will be an increase in the levels of hate incidents as new avenues of offending develop via social media. This will lead to a range of challenges for investigations, in part due to the international nature of the service providers such as Twitter. Suffolk Constabulary will look to ensure that we deal with all these cases in a professional and robust way, as not challenging this behaviour could lead to its normalisation and a potential for more serious offending.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 2.1 None.

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

- 3.1 No changes are needed to the PCC risk register.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	No
Have human resource implications been considered?	No
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	N/A
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	N/A
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	N/A
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	N/A